



Micro Craft, Inc  
123 Fairington Rd  
Huntsville, AL  
35806  
[256] 830 9746  
www.micro-craft.net

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Attorney General John Ashcroft  
US Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

I am writing to enter my comments in the public record relating to settlement of the Microsoft antitrust case. I strongly support the settlement. I believe that Microsoft has led the effort to standardize certain software that has been of benefit to users across industry lines. I own and operate a company that creates software for lawyers. If Microsoft had not created a standard for operating system software, my company could not compete in the marketplace. We are too small a company to hire enough programmers to write our programs to run on half a dozen operating systems. In addition, if we could, the cost of our programs would be prohibitive for our customers. Believe it or not, not all lawyers are rich. We sell our legal billing software to many sole practitioners and one-to-five person law firms. Because there is one standard, we can write our software for one operating system and make it affordable for every one of our customers. We have been in business since 1978. We're small, but over 8000 law firms use or have used our software. I honestly believe Microsoft has made it possible for our company to exist, stay in business and compete.

I find that our customers have a very hard time learning to operate computers. We assist them in zipping up files, emailing data to us for correction, and making backup copies of their data, as well as running our software. If there wasn't a standard in basic software used on computers, we couldn't help our customers. And they would not be as productive in their practice. I personally think Microsoft should be considered a national treasure.

Microsoft has made a number of important concessions to reach this settlement. The most important of these, in my opinion, is Microsoft's agreement to allow computer makers the option of configuring Windows systems so as to promote

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software programs of non-Microsoft companies. There will now be greater opportunities for software manufacturers and greater choice for consumers.

This antitrust suit has gone on for quite some time now, and it needs to come to an end. I hope that the proposed agreement is accepted and implemented in the very near future. It will be good for the economy.

Sincerely,



Joan Ivy